



Belgium-Japan Association
Chamber of Commerce
日白協会兼商工会議所



TRADE FLOWS & CULTURAL NEWS

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EDITORIAL

Belgium, the heart of Europe !

By HE Mr Elio di Rupo, Prime Minister of Belgium

Belgium and Japan, two geographically distant countries, have a long-standing and successful bond with lasting cultural, economic and scientific exchanges. Both countries share the same tradition of excelling in the things they undertake, driven by the same will to constantly improve things.

I am keen to continue and intensify our cooperation. Belgium is a welcoming country with an open-minded approach to trade and exchanges. Brussels hosts the European institutions and NATO and is ranked second after Washington. Belgium is thus a strategic meeting place for decision-makers from all over the world.

Foreign investors greatly value Belgium because of the quality of its labour force, its favourable legislation for investors to develop activities, its high living standards and its leading infrastructure in terms of airports, ports, road networks and telecommunications.

The numerous Japanese companies based in Belgium, in some cases already for several decades,

are willingly sticking to their choice. Our country provides them an ideal environment to develop their activities. The Belgian authorities assist Japanese companies in their various endeavours and do their very best to simplify or reduce their administrative burden. Investing in Belgium guarantees these companies a reliable, reinsuring and stimulation framework.

The regional authorities in Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels are more than ever determined to do the utmost to welcome foreign investors. Our Japanese partners can count on their professionalism, care and hands-on support at all stages, from setting up their business through its development.

So, I welcome all of our Japanese friends visiting the country; the political representatives, captains of industry, scientists but also the tourists. You will always find a warm haven in Belgium and opportunities to meet with professional partners who will make life easier for you. I wish you a pleasant stay or a pleasant time setting up your business here!



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Internet security: The impact of EU cyberspace policy on Japanese companies and the relevance of international cooperation

Thursday 28 November 2013 - European Parliament



Mr Stevens of Toyota Motor Europe and Chairman BJA EU Committee, entertains all with some business questions.



A lively discussion with the speakers of the event and the participants rolled out.



Mr Cabiau, Policy Officer of the EC DG Connect, and Mr Berghe, Lawyer of White & Case, enjoying the cocktails kindly offered by Fujitsu.

In the framework of the EC directive on network and information security which would require certain market players, such as e-commerce platforms or cloud computing services, to adopt security measures and to report security incidents to competent



authorities, the BJA EU Committee was pleased to invite the members to a round-table on Internet security. The event was hosted by MEP Ivailo Kalin, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria and shadow-rapporteur for the proposed directive in the EP industry committee.

Participants had the occasion to exchange views with experts and industry representatives on the impact of the proposed rules on Japanese companies operating in Europe and on the importance of international cooperation. Among the experts who joined forces were Mr Cabiau, Policy Officer, Trust & Security Unit, European Commission, DG Connect, Mr Ouchi, First Secretary, Mission of Japan to the EU and Mr John Alcock, Head of Security Professional Services within Fujitsu UK&I. The lively discussion continued throughout the cocktails which were kindly sponsored by Fujitsu.



Visit to the 92nd European Motor Show 第92回ヨーロッパ・モーターショー・ブリュッセルへの訪問

Thursday, 16 January 2014, Brussels Expo



The BJA group, led by Mr Rodolphe Bensele, an automotive expert, was warmly welcomed by Mr Peter Gemoets at Mazda Motors.



The participants are listening attentively to Mr Bart Hendrickx for his presentation on the new concept at Suzuki.



HE Ambassador Kojiro Shiojiri of the Mission of Japan to the EU is discovering the stand of the Nissan Motor together with the BJA members.

On Thursday, 16th of January, a Japan Day was celebrated at the 92nd European Motor Show – Brussels 2014 organized by FEBIAC (the Federation of the Belgian Automobile and Cycle Industry). Thanks to the courtesy of Mr Thierry van Kan, Chairman of FEBIAC, the members were cordially invited to a cocktail offered by the Committee of the Motor Show in honour of HE Ambassador Mitsuo Sakaba of Embassy of Japan and HE Ambassador Kojiro Shiojiri of the Mission of Japan to the EU.

Mr Rodolph Bensele, an automotive expert, expressed his warm welcome to the participants and guided the group through the stands of 9 Japanese automakers - Mazda – Lexus – Honda – Toyota – Subaru – Isuzu – Suzuki – Mitsubishi – Nissan at which the members enjoyed discovering so many stylish and eco-friendly new car models. In addition, the management teams of Lexus and Mitsubishi have kindly extended a special welcome by inviting the mem-

bers to their VIP rooms where some nice refreshments were served. The visit ended with a networking cocktail offered by the Committee of the Motor Show in honor of HE Ambassador Sakaba where the members and the Ambassador enthusiastically exchanged comments about their dream cars.



(left to right) Mr Van Overstraeten, Partner of the Linklaters LLP and Vice-President of BJA, Mr van Kan, Chairman of FEBIAC, Baron Moorkens, Honorary Vice-President of BJA, and HE Ambassador Sakaba of the Embassy of Japan to Belgium.



BJA New Year Cocktail Reception BJA 新年カクテルパーティー

Monday 20 January 2014 – Cercle Royal Gaulois, Brussels



“Kagamiwari”, traditional sake barrel breaking ceremony by (left to right) HE Ambassador Kojiro Shiojiri of the Mission of Japan to the EU, Mrs Veerle De Vos of Radio 1 Journalist, Mr Thomas Leysen, President of BJA and the Chairman of Umicore, and HE Ambassador Mitsuo Sakaba of the Embassy of Japan to Belgium.



(left to right) Mr Stevens, Senior Manager European & Government Affairs of Toyota Motor Europe and the Chairman of BJA EU Committee, Mr Nishino, Senior Relationship Manager of BNP Paribas Fortis, Mr de Schoutheete de Tervarent of BNP Paribas Fortis, and Mr Leroy, President & CEO of Toyota Motor Europe are sharing hopes for the new year.



In the beautiful premises of Cercle Royal Gaulois, the BJA members and guests are in full joy over tasty sake, delicious sushi, and cheerful conversation.

The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had a great pleasure in inviting the members to celebrate a promising New Year at the Cercle Royal Gaulois on Monday 20 January 2014. Mr Thomas Leysen, BJA President and Chairman of Umicore, opened the evening with a short welcome speech thanking the members of BJA and everyone involved for their dedicated support to the BJA. Following, Mrs Veerle De Vos, Radio 1 journalist and Laureate Marilo Fund, spoke about her experiences as a radio journalist on mission in Japan. After her insightful speech, the traditional ‘Kagamiwari’ - the sake barrel breaking ceremony was performed by HE Ambassador Sakaba, HE Ambassador Shiojiri of the Mission of Japan to the EU, Mr Leysen, and Mrs De Vos. After the successful sake barrel breaking, the guests continued to enjoy the evening with delicious sushi, sake and canapés, which



Mrs Veerle De Vos, Radio 1 Journalist & Laureate Marilo Fund gives a presentation on Life in Japan.

were generously sponsored by Marilo Fund. All the guests left the beautiful venue with a full belly, smiles and joy... it certainly was a way to begin a Cheerful New Year.



Origami & Furoshiki workshop 折り紙&風呂敷ワークショップ

Sunday 1 December 2013, Brussels

I always enjoy going to the activities of the BJA Friendship Committee. Each time at their events I find a group of passionate people and a friendly atmosphere. On the outset, I wanted to discover Japanese culture, and make acquaintance with people who shared my interest about this wonderful country. In my opinion, this is the best place for that in Belgium. The activities are always interesting and well organized. In addition, they are usually followed by informal drinks, which is a great way to meet the other participants.

Matthieu Gilson



news for the members

EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE MONS 2015: OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

In 2015 the entire Europe will be looking at Mons. The city will bear the prestigious title of European Capital of Culture. For a whole year the city will have an exceptional opportunity to assert its position on the international cultural chessboard, with corresponding benefits to the local economy, tourism and enhanced media exposure.

The Belgian cities of Antwerp, Brussels and Bruges have already received this envied title. In 2015 Mons will share the title with the Czech city of Pilsen.

Mons 2015 is...

- › **A great international rendez-vous, open to everyone**, with hundreds of artists from here and abroad, historical-cultural figures to discover, and sensational events from Europe and beyond. The first gathering will take place on 24th January 2015 for the opening ceremony.
- › **The bringing together of historical and contemporary heritage**. A city of historic heritage, recognized by UNESCO, Mons intends to highlight its rich heritage and contrast it with new, contemporary architecture designed by renowned architects such as Santiago Calatrava and Daniel Libeskind.
- › **An encounter between technology and culture**. It is this gamble that underlies the approach Mons has adopted to its vision of the European Capital of Culture. Thanks to digital technologies, a range of opportunities has opened up and added a whole new dimension to the words invent and enterprise. Exhibitions will be organized to showcase the impact of new technologies in defining and enhancing our perceptions of culture.
- › **A massive cultural project with more than a hundred events** in Mons, across the region and in 14 partner cities, including a series of large exhibitions. The first to open its doors from January will be dedicated to the painter Vincent Van Gogh, whose dazzling career started in Mons in 1880.

Among other major projects, the "Ailleurs en Folie" will honor eight cities. A whole week will be dedicated to each one of them. The programme will put the light on their urban landscape, dance and music, installations and exhibitions, alternative and popular culture, the art of living and more.

Tokyo is one of these cities that, for a few days, will transform the "Maison Folie" of Mons. This will be an invitation to discover aspects of Japanese culture and its emblematic capital.

From the dynamism of the city to the poetic serenity of the countryside and gardens, from kawaii to the underground, different facets of this megalopolis will be revealed to the people of Mons 2015. Let's be seduced by harajuku fashion, initiate ourselves in

the art of Shogi, open these curious and marvelous gift packages for which the Japanese hold the secret, allow origami to grow and open up before us, take advantage of the journey to discover culinary culture and explore the rich world of Japanese tea.

Just like the Salarymen of Yuki Aoyama, "let's leap from one end of the world to the other, in one energetic bound."

Dates

- › Mons 2015, European Capital of Culture: from 24th January to 31st December 2015
- › Madness Abroad - Tokyo: From Thursday 15th October to Sunday 25th 2015

Times

- › Opening Thursday 15th October at 6:30pm
- › Fri, Sat: from 10:30am to midnight
- › Sun: from 11:30am to 8:00pm
- › Mon, Tue, Wed: from 10:00am to 6:00pm

Businesses and associations can book private evening visits on Mon 19th, Tue 20th and Wed 21st October

It is possible to integrate the display stands for innovative Japanese companies.

Being the European Capital of Culture is clearly an ambitious cultural project, but above all it is an incredible human adventure made possible thanks to the support of public and private partners. Different partnership packages have been created in order to make it possible for any type of business or organization to take part in this exceptional year, the economic implications of which will benefit the region.

The Foundation Mons 2015 will assist businesses and organizations wishing to investigate the sponsorship package that best suits its specific requirements, industry or identity. This is a real chance to be a part of this unique event that will stand out proudly both in Belgium and internationally.

For all partnership information

- › Anne-Sophie Charle,
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For all general information:

- › Caroline Kadziola,
Director of International Relations
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50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER

Celebrating the ties that connect Japan and Belgium

IN THE PRESENCE OF

*His Royal Highness Prince Laurent and
Her Royal Highness Princess Claire of Belgium*

PROGRAMME OF THE EVENING

*Speech by Thomas Leysen, President of BJA
Speech by HE Ambassador Sakaba, Japanese Embassy to Belgium
Piano performance by Jef Neve
Fashion show by Tom Van der Borcht
Fashion show by Van Hongo
Lucky draw
Enchantment by Carlos Vaquera*



50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER



*" GREAT ATMOSPHERE - NICE VENUE - EXCELLENT FOOD FROM CHEF KAMO
ENJOYED MEETING INTERESTING PEOPLE AT OUR TABLE. " Marc Evrard, COO of Contraste*



“ VERY PROUD TO HAVE PARTICIPATED TO THIS HIGH-LEVEL EVENT, COMBINING A GOOD ATMOSPHERE AND A BRILLIANT NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY BETWEEN BELGIAN AND JAPANESE BUSINESS COMMUNITY. ” *Pascal Lizin, Director External and Public Affairs, GSK Vaccines, President Essenscia Wallonia*

50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER



*"A GREAT EVENT WITH A SYMPATHETIC ATMOSPHERE,
A VERY NICE PROGRAMME AND DELICIOUS FOOD AND WINE."* Professor Andreas Thele

*Carpaccio of tuna with seasonal
vegetables and plum vinegar*

＊
 鮪のカルパッチョ、季節野菜と梅肉
 ドレッシング添え
 ＊

By Chef Tomoyasu Kamo of Restaurant Kamo



*“ A PRESTIGIOUS EVENT AND OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VALUABLE INFORMATION WITH EXISTING AS WELL AS NEW MEMBERS.
 AND NOT TO MENTION THE FANTASTIC VARIETY OF CUISINES PREPARED BY THE CHEFS WERE EXQUISITE. ”* Nicolas Sepulchre, Managing Director, Sogeman



TOM VAN DER BORGH

Belgian fashion designer Tom Van der Borcht is not in search for traditional beauty, poetical cleanliness or honey-sweet cutesiness. He always hunts the clash between subculture and mainstream. For Van der Borcht, reality is a diverse entity: he adores the socio-cultural tensions embedded in a revolving society. His fashion playground is on the edge between “normal” and “weird”, revealing an unseen and unconventional new standard of beauty.

Obvious borders between men and women slowly merge into each other, pushing the human forward, acting as an autonomous subject in its context. From now on, art is wearable!

Aponycalypse (AW1314) is confirming Van der Borcht's booming career in fashion design. He already won several international competitions, including the Berlin Fashion Week Young Designer Award 2013 and the label has now been noticed in Central America, where Van der Borcht was headliner at Panama Fashion Week. He is booming, dreaming and conquering the world. TVDB is available in shops in the USA, Dubai and Japan.

The label is sold in two stores in Tokyo's uber-trendy fashion district Harajuku. The 'Ugla.jp' is an important online TVDB-seller in Japan and the shop called 'Wut Berlin' quickly became a Tokyo fashion icon. Their release of Aponycalypse was a big hit: it took only few hours (!) to sell out the whole collection after launching it. Ponies on Acid.

With his Aponycalypse collection, Van der Borcht is showing a series of pleated garments, colourful jacquard knits, rough-rope knits, edgy street wear basics and a series of mind-blowing accessories, using tie-wraps as a leitmotiv.

General enquiries:
info@tomvanderborcht.com

Mousse of scallop with Japanese
konbu and Belgian shrimps
with yuzu flavored
white butter sauce and caviar

＊
やわらかいホタテのムース、北海道
産昆布と ベルギー産小エビの ファ
ルシー仕立て、柚子の香りのバター
ソース、キャビア添え

＊
By Chef Willy Roeseems





VAN HONGO

What is the brand about?

Van Hongo evokes the image of traditional femininity, ladylike and classic; the intimate part strips away the formality. The collections are luxurious and interesting all at once. The interest, as always, is generated primarily by textures and knits, with many simplified cuts that still fully embody Van Hongo's esthetic. And yet there is still enough architecture in these minimal pieces to make them true standouts.

Who is behind the brand?

Designer Izumi Hongo was born in Tokyo, though currently living in Antwerp. After graduation in 2010 at the Royal Academy Antwerp, she started up her own label Van Hongo and opened in 2011 her Salon Van Hongo in Antwerp, a flagshipstore together with her atelier. Her design is characterized for the use of rich fabrics and her color combinations. She uses several unique fabrics from all over the world and combine them with her original and sophisticated silk print. As Izumi is by origin an architect, she often uses a technique of layering the colors, lace knit or fine silk to make deep-textures.

What is the Japan-Belgium connection?

As a Japanese designer living in Belgium the connection between Japan and Belgium is already quite obvious. Subsequently Van Hongo has several sales points in Japan and travels twice a year to Tokyo to participate the Japan Fashion Week. Furthermore Van Hongo organizes a temporary pop-up store for its customers that follow the brand already from the early start.

Japan's or Belgium's influence on the collection(s in general) ?

The Japanese influence is reflected in the sensitiveness for silk, layering of subtle different colors, and her perfectionism in everything she does. She moved to Belgium to study Fashion as she was, especially at that moment, into Belgian fashion in general (especially being a big fan of Dries van Noten). The continuous style is influenced by Belgian atmosphere which is down to earth.

Shop details for people interested in buying?

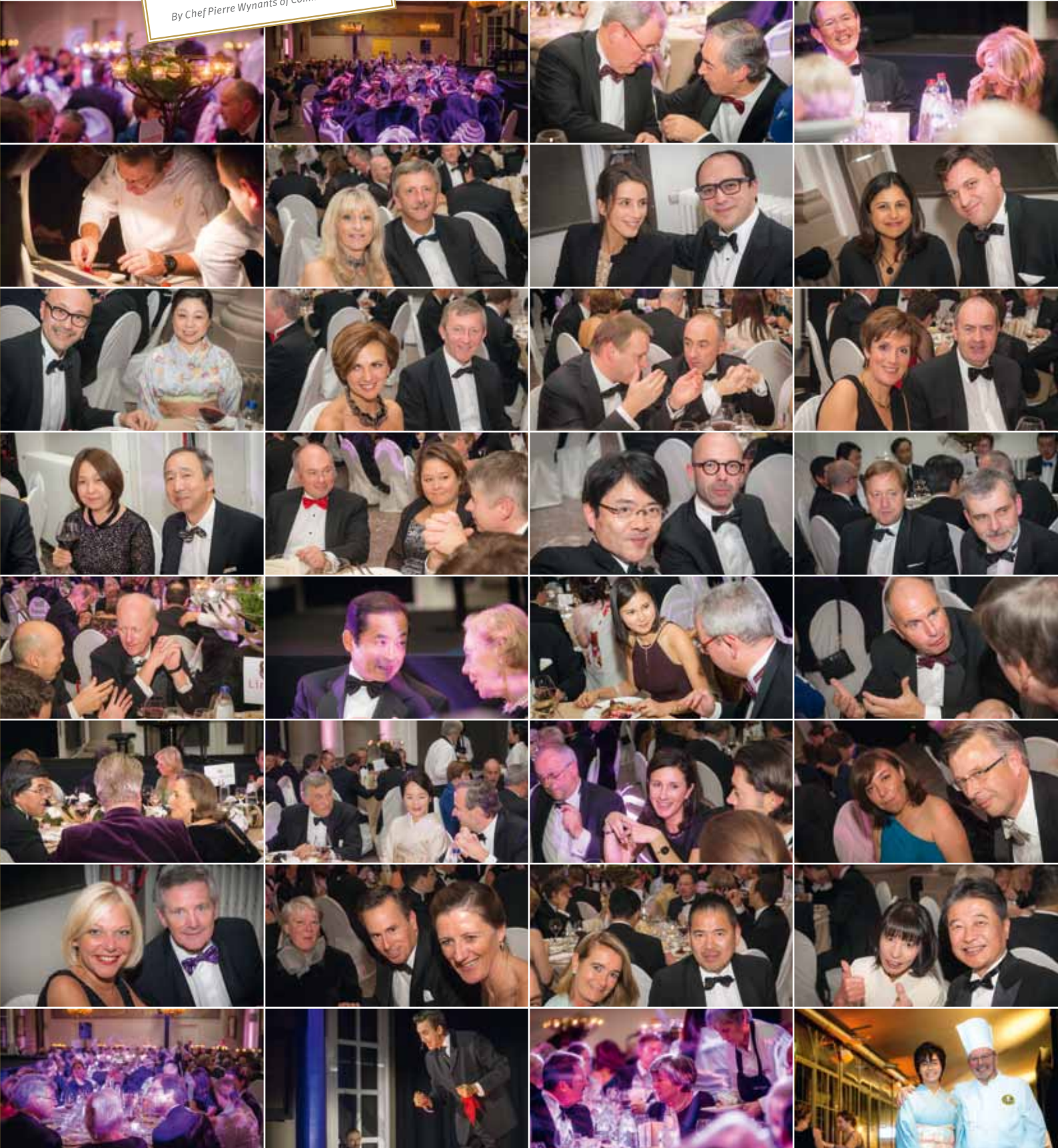
Izumi Hongo has her own shop-atelier in Antwerp, Scheldestraat 98 where she welcomes personally visitors. Furthermore Van Hongo is sold at Quadra in Ghent. In Japan Van Hongo is sold in Tokyo, Osaka and Toyama. Except these two countries, people also can find the collection in USA and Holland.

For more information: www.vanhongo.com

Fillet steak of wild deer with
cardamom and acacia honey

※
野生鹿肉のフィレステーキ、カル
ダモンとアカシアのハチミツの照り
焼き風
※

By Chef Pierre Wynants of Comme Chez Soi



“ THIS WAS NOT ONLY AN AMAZING “ROYAL” NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY WHEREBY WE COULD MEET MANY JAPANESE AND BELGIAN FRIENDS BUT THIS ALSO WAS A FEAST FOR THE EYES AND EARS WITH DELICIOUS FOOD AND MUSIC THAT TOUCHED YOUR SOUL. AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING. I CANNOT WAIT FOR THE BJACC TO CELEBRATE ITS 100TH BIRTHDAY ! ” Alexandre Pirotte | Manager Belgium and Luxembourg - Attorney at law – FRAGOMEN

50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER



Biscuit of chocolate with
hazelnut Poached pear
with spicy orange sauce
“Wittamer” chocolate mousse



味覚の秋の香り、ヘーゼルナッツの
ショコラビスケット
スパイスの効いたオレンジ風味の洋
梨の含ませ煮 Wittamer オリジナル
ムースオーショコラ



By Chef Christophe Roeseams of Wittamer



“ I FELT IT WAS A SPLENDID EVENING IN A PARTICULARLY WARM AND FESTIVE ATMOSPHERE.
IT BROUGHT BELGIUM AND JAPAN TOGETHER IN A SHARED SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE AND FRIENDSHIP” Thomas Leysen, Chairman, Umicore



BJA WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO

Pianist Mr Jef Neve

Fashion designers Mrs Izumi Hongo and Mr Tom Van der Borght

Master of Ceremony Mr Carlos Vaquera

Chef Tomoyasu Kamo and his team

Chef Willy Roesems and Chef Fabian Hermans

Chef Pierre Wynants and Chef Patrick Spiessens

Chef Christophe Roesems of Wittamer

Our exclusive BJA 50 years Sponsors

*And last but not least all the dedicated BJA members
and guests*

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BJA = PURE GOLD

As it was enhanced in the first place
by the presence of HRH Prince Laurent of Belgium
and HRH Princess Claire of Belgium
as well as by the presence of
H.E. Mr Sakaba, Ambassador of Japan to Belgium and Mrs Sakaba,
H.E. Mr Shiojiri, Ambassador of Japan to the European Union and Mrs Shiojiri.

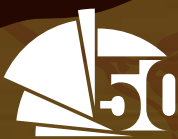
Pure GOLD as BJA is young enough to be creative & dynamic
and old enough to be experienced & very efficient.

The perfect and well thought organization
of the Golden Event was proof of that :
as it was genuine entertainment to the ear, the eye,
the laughing muscles and last but not least to the taste buds.

All our guests at the Marilo Fund table were utterly
pleased by the supreme quality of the Event,
they were very glad to attend to.

CONGRATULATIONS !

F&L Blondé-Eelen



日白協会兼商工会議所
50 YEARS Belgium-Japan Association
Chamber of Commerce

BJA WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO THE EXCLUSIVE SPONSORS OF THE GALA EVENT

Lieve Blondé-Eelen
with a warm & active heart to
Japan-Belgium connection
(and this since **1974**)

Frans Blondé
founding director of **BJA**
& Chamber of Commerce

TOYOTA



news from the members

BBF, EXPANDING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INTERNATIONALS

As a leading provider of furnished and unfurnished apartments in Brussels, BBF is rapidly expanding their facilities in the city to meet the needs of internationals living short- and long-term in Belgium.

Just a few months ago BBF inaugurated its two new properties in Brussels. Both Water View and Manhattan View residences are situated near the Tours and Taxis district, which is gradually developing into an attractive business area.

Water View is located in a surprising spot with unique surroundings, and the 80 furnished apartments are certain to be popular with residents. Situated in the heart of the European district and the business centre of Brussels, the property enjoys great views of the canal as its name suggests. The district around the Water View Residence is buzzing with vitality and the area is undergoing a trendy facelift. Beliris, the Federal Government Authority for Mobility and Transport is working with the Brussels Capital Region on upgrading the area, and the redevelopment of the Western Inner Ring will revitalise the surroundings of the canal.

BBF's other property, Manhattan View residence offers a mix of 80 furnished and unfurnished apartments that are sure to make residents feel right at home. Situated at the intersection of the Boulevard Emile Jacqmain and the Boulevard d'Anvers, it has a top location.

The premium-class appearance of the building is continued inside. Lightness creates an unequalled atmosphere in the living spaces, which are all fitted with every comfort. The high quality and durable materials used add to the comfort of our residents.

Soon BBF will open its new project which has a top location in the centre of Brussels.

Only a few steps from the famous Grand Place and Place Sainte Catherine, Square Residence is a treat for people who want to stay in the beating heart of Brussels. Situated between Place de la Monnaie and Place de la Bourse these bright apartments are an ideal base if you like to indulge yourself with everything Brussels has on offer. Just on the other side of rue des Fripiers is the touristic Rue des Petits Bouchers area where you will also find the stunning Galeries Royales St. Hubert. Square Residence offers splendid studio's and apartments with trendy decorations and furniture.

Source: www.bbf.be

YAMAGATA EUROPE は創業 15 年を迎え、新たにモスクワ支社を設立致しました。

Yamagata Europe は、Yamagata グループのヨーロッパにおけるビジネス展開の拠点として 1998 年 12 月に創立され、技術文書や取扱説明書の制作、翻訳、印刷を行っています。オフィスはベルギーのアントワープにあり、スロバキアのブラチスラヴァに支社が、南ドイツに営業所があります。1 月 17 日には、1913 年の World Expo 開催時に建てられ、美しい景観を誇るアントワープの Vooruit にて、15 周年記念のパーティーを開催致します。

弊社は、このパーティーを新しいマーケットと出会う機会にしたいと考えます。近年、弊社がお付き合いさせて頂いている多国籍企業様の多くが、そのヨーロッパ本部からロシアにおける営業活動やマーケティングを切り離す傾向にあると感じています。ロシアのマーケットは非常に大きなものでありますが、バルト諸国から日本海に面したウラジオストクまでに渡る広大な大陸には、ロシアならではの独特なアプローチが必要です。そのために、弊社はモスクワ支社を開設することを決めました。Brestskaya 通りに位置するモスクワ支社は 2014 年 4 月開設予定です。

詳しい情報をお知りになりたい方はこちらまでご連絡ください：
取締役 Geert Benoit, geert@yamagata-europe.com

YAMAGATA EUROPE CELEBRATES 15 YEARS IN EUROPE AND ESTABLISHES MOSCOW BRANCH

Yamagata Europe was established in December 1998 as a first foothold in Europe for the Yamagata Group. Today Yamagata Europe is the European Headquarters of the Yamagata group and creates, translates and prints technical documentation and manuals. The company is based in Ghent and has a branch office in Bratislava and a sales presence in South Germany. On January 17th the company will have its 15th anniversary party in De Vooruit in Ghent, a splendid building that was built for the World Expo in Gent in 1913.

Amidst all this partying, we are exploring other markets. In recent years we have noticed that most of our multinational clients have been de-connecting the Russian sales and marketing activities from their European Headquarters. Given the size of the Russian market and the specific localized approach that is needed for the vast continent that reaches from the Baltic States all the way to the Japanese sea in Vladivostok, Yamagata Europe has decided to set up a branch in Moscow. The new branch will be operational from the beginning of April 2014 and is located in Brestskaya street.

Contact for more info:

Geert Benoit, Managing Director, geert@yamagata-europe.com

news from the members

AWARD OF THE “AMBASSADOR’S COMMENDATION”

On December 10th of 2013, an awarding ceremony of the Ambassador’s Commendation was held at the Ambassador’s residence. The following three persons were awarded the commendations for their valuable contribution to promoting friendly relations and enhancing economic and cultural exchanges between Japan and Belgium.

Prof. Andreas Thele

Director of Japanese Studies Centre, University of Liège

Prof. Thele has contributed to promoting cultural and academic relations through research and lectures in Japanese Studies for more than 20 years at the University of Liège and through Japanese language education at the University of Mons. Professor Thele has been a dedicated member of the BJA Cultural Committee for almost 2 decades.

Mr Tanguy Van Overstraeten

Vice President of Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce (BJA)

Mr Van Overstraeten has contributed to promoting economic relations through working on legal issues related to Japan’s and Belgium’s investment for more than 20 years, particularly by establishing and managing the Legal and Tax Committee at BJA. Besides his work for a number of Japanese companies over the past 20 years at the BJA and as partner of the global law firm Linklaters LLP, Tanguy is also Director of the Marilo Fund, a foundation aiming at increasing the visibility of Japan in the Belgian media. He has also chaired the organising committee of the 2013-2014 Japanese Week, during which a series of events around Japan has taken place in commemoration of the earthquake and tsunami of 11 March 2011.

Prof. Dimitri Vanoverbeke

Professor of Japanese Studies, Catholic University of Leuven

Prof. Vanoverbeke has contributed to promoting cultural and academic relations through research and lectures in Japanese Studies at Catholic University of Leuven for more than 15 years and through activities in various areas of exchange between Japan and Belgium. Professor Vanoverbeke is also dedicated to the BJA Cultural Committee since a few years.

The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce would like to warmly congratulate all the bestowed of a certificate of commendation by His Excellency Ambassador Mitsuo Sakaba, Japanese ambassador to Belgium. The BJA is indebted to their zeal and dedication to the cause we all support.

Source:

www.be.emb-japan.go.jp/english/archives/news_131210c.html



NIPPON EXPORT AWARD 2013-2014

The Nippon Export Award is a biennial award, given to the most successful company exporting to Japan, importing into Japan or distributing within Japan, Belgian-Luxembourg products or services for the year 2013. The Award went to GODIVA JAPAN, Inc., the famous Belgian chocolate brand and active in Japan since 1972.

The jury praised Godiva Japan for its innovative and far-reaching new strategy. Their strategy to develop entirely new products based on chocolate, increased significantly the reach of the brand in a stagnant market.

"We are very honoured to receive the Nippon Export Award



2013-2014, as Japan is a key strategic market for us. We have built our brand over the years in Japan through strengthening our tradition based on Belgian credentials, and embracing innovation through product and channel development.

In the recent years, as the Japanese economy and the chocolate category were stagnating, we implemented a new consumer strategy to delight our existing consumers and recruit new consumers through innovative products offering, better service, and a new advertising approach.

The Nippon Export Award is a great recognition for all our employees and partners who worked with tremendous creativity and passion to build successfully a sustainable and profitable growth. This Award will also strengthen our commitment to delight our Japanese consumers with the ultimate chocolate experience." , said Jerome Chouchan, President & Representative Director of Godiva Japan.

The Nippon Export Award is under the High Patronage of the Prime Minister of Belgium and the Prime Minister of Luxembourg; and receives the support of the Embassy of Belgium in Japan, the Embassy of Luxembourg in Japan, the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce, METI - Belgo-Luxembourg Market Council (BLMC), Agence Wallonne à l'Exportation (AWEX), Brussels Invest & Export, Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT). The Award Ceremony was held at the Belgian Embassy in Tokyo on Wednesday 20 November 2013.

For more information www.blccj.or.jp

The BJA would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest members:

Sponsor

EAST JAPAN RAILWAY COMPANY

East Japan Railway Company

The JR East Group operates a range of business, starting with our trains and the railway-related business in our stations. We are also continuing to develop our life-style and IT & Suica businesses, which have become the second and third pillars of our operations. We are now also committed to a new challenge, to establish our Railcar Manufacturing Business as the fourth pillar of us.

With 25 years having passed since the JNR privatization reform and the foundation of the company, the JR East Group now begins its next quarter century. We will be following its new policy, "Management Vision V - Ever Onward", a policy based on our shared theme of Thriving with Communities, Growing Globally.

We aim to grow continuously while meeting our social responsibilities as a Trusted Life-Style Service Creating Group.

EAST JAPAN RAILWAY COMPANY

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Two of our lawyers have held senior positions in the Commission and maintain extensive contacts throughout EU institutions. Our clients also benefit from our Japanese-qualified lawyer, who has a wealth of practical experience gained at a leading law firm in Japan.

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